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# Convenient, Clean and Safe Roadside Accommodations

*Tangible Result Driver – Don Hillis,  
Director of System Management*

Many Missouri motorists depend on roadside parks and rest areas during their travels for the opportunity to rest and refresh themselves in a safe environment. Providing safe, clean and convenient accommodations allows motorists to travel more safely and comfortably.



## Convenient, Clean and Safe Roadside Accommodations

### *Percent of customers satisfied with rest areas' convenience, cleanliness and safety*

**Result Driver:** Don Hillis, Director of System Management

**Measurement Driver:** Jim Carney, State Maintenance Engineer

**Purpose of the Measure:**

This measure helps MoDOT understand customer expectations concerning the convenience, cleanliness and safety of its rest areas. This information will provide insight to rest area location, lighting and security as well as the overall cleanliness expectations.

**Measurement and Data Collection:**

MoDOT measures this attribute with both internal and external data collection. MoDOT receives information from a survey card offered at all rest areas. The survey cards asks a variety of questions with three of the questions specifically asking if the rest area is convenient, clean and safe. This provides direct input from our customers and is considered the external source. All comments from the cards are sent to the districts and sheltered workshop contractor to ensure concerns are addressed in a timely manner.

To ensure the customer satisfaction, all rest areas are inspected using an attribute list developed and based on an industry-wide literature review. The attribute list includes characteristics rest-area users identified as what they consider convenient, clean and safe. MoDOT maintenance employees inspect all rest areas and the work of the sheltered workshop contractor at least two times per month using this list and are considered the internal source.

MoDOT works with Extended Employment Sheltered Workshops to provide the cleaning at all 19 rest areas in the system. The sheltered workshop employees provide this service 365 days a year, many from early morning (6 a.m.) to late in the evening (10 p.m.). This measure is updated quarterly.

**Improvement Status:**

The rest area survey cards were made available in May 2005. The increase in the number of returned cards corresponds with the seasonal increase in visitors to the rest areas. A total of 9,774 cards were returned in fiscal year 2008 compared to 8,178 in fiscal year 2007 and 8,054 in 2006. In the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2008, 1,918 cards were returned. This is lower than the number of returned surveys in the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2007.

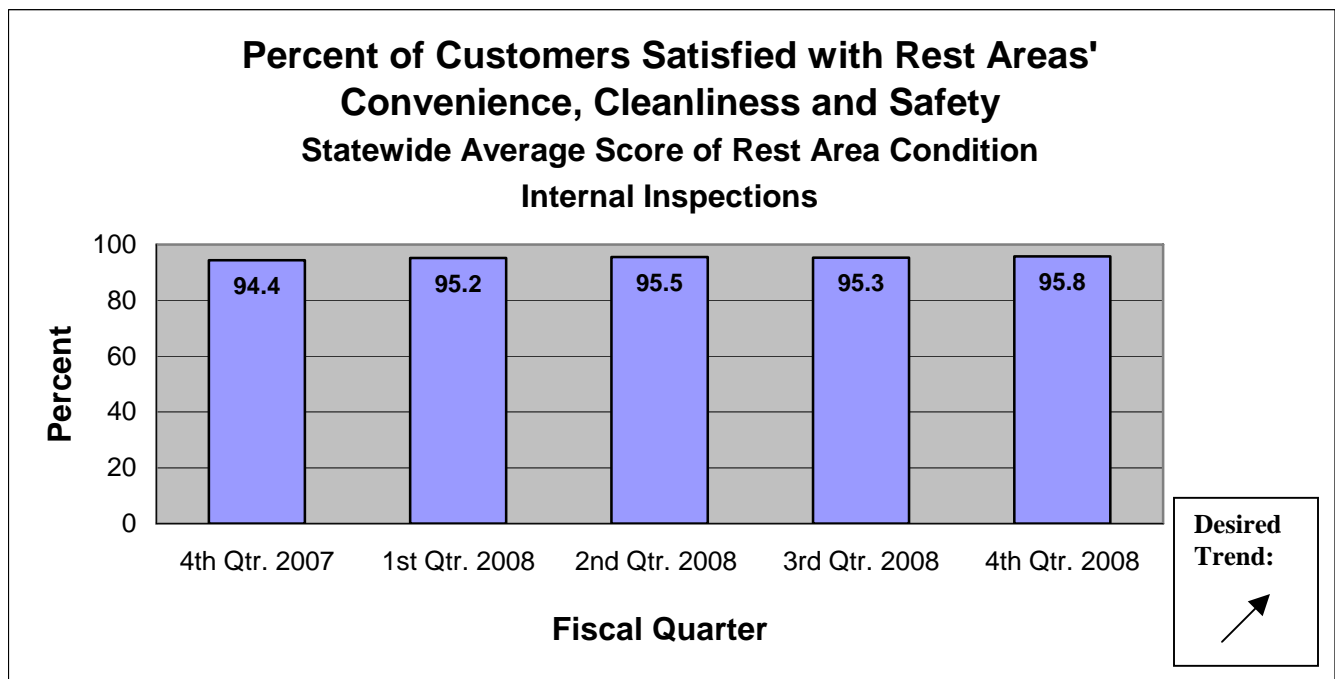
- Fourth Quarter fiscal year 2007, 2,776 surveys received
- First Quarter fiscal year 2008, 4,653 surveys received
- Second Quarter fiscal year 2008, 1,945 surveys received
- Third Quarter fiscal year 2008, 1,195 surveys received
- Fourth Quarter fiscal year 2008, 1,981 surveys received

Customer satisfaction for the three attributes is slightly higher in cleanliness and safety and lower in convenience when compared to the previous quarter but not by a significant amount. The “not clean” comments were from isolated sites rather than one location. MoDOT implements actions to improve the cleanliness at rest areas with lower satisfaction ratings by direct contact with the contractor. Cards were returned from 49 states, Canada, Ireland, the United Kingdom, Switzerland, Mongolia, China and Spain.

MoDOT is doing extremely well at meeting the customers' expectations for convenient, clean and safe facilities; largely in part to these inspections conducted a minimum of two times per month. The inspection scores increased from 95.3 to 95.8 percent for the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2008, higher than the same time period of fiscal year 2007. MoDOT takes care of maintenance concerns in a timely manner to keep the rest areas open for use.



Note: Rest area customer satisfaction benchmarks are limited. Florida's 2004 rest area customer survey results found: 90 percent said the rest areas were clean, 83 percent said there were enough rest areas and 88 percent said the rest areas were safe.



## Convenient, Clean and Safe Roadside Accommodations

### *Percent of customers satisfied with commuter lots' convenience, cleanliness and safety*

**Result Driver:** Don Hillis, Director of System Management

**Measurement Driver:** Tim Chojnacki, Maintenance Liaison Engineer

**Purpose of the Measure:**

This measure will help the department understand customer expectations concerning commuter lot convenience, cleanliness and safety. This information will provide insight to location, lighting and security at commuter lots as well as their overall cleanliness.

**Measurement and Data Collection:**

MoDOT receives information in the form of survey cards distributed by MoDOT employees at 20 commuter lots. The survey contains a variety of questions, three of which specifically ask if the commuter lot is convenient, clean and safe. This is a baseline measure that provides direct input from the department's customers and is considered an external source. This is an annual measure updated each January.

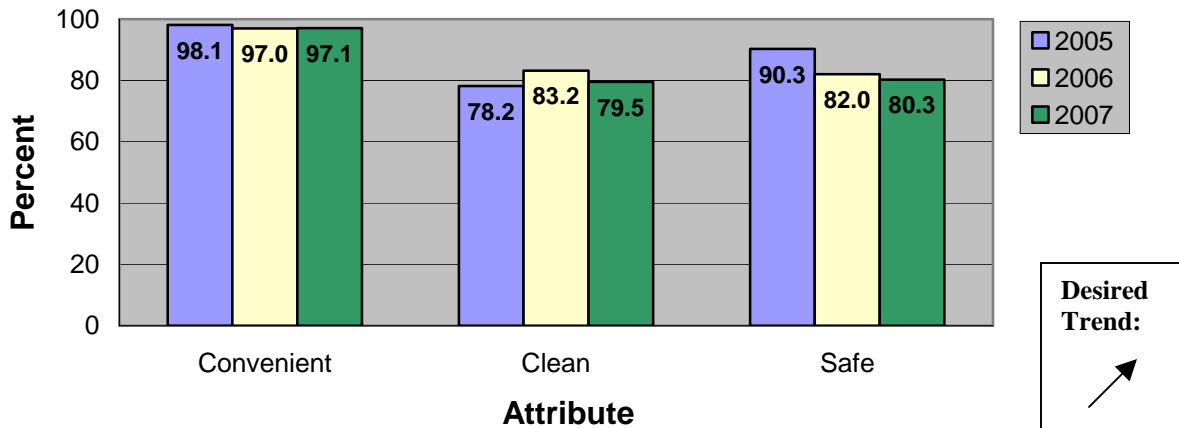
To further assess condition and ensure customer satisfaction with the commuter lots, all lots are inspected based on attributes identified in an industry-wide literature review as to what commuter lot customers consider convenient, clean and safe. MoDOT maintenance employees inspect all commuter lots each quarter. This measure is updated quarterly.

**Improvement Status:**

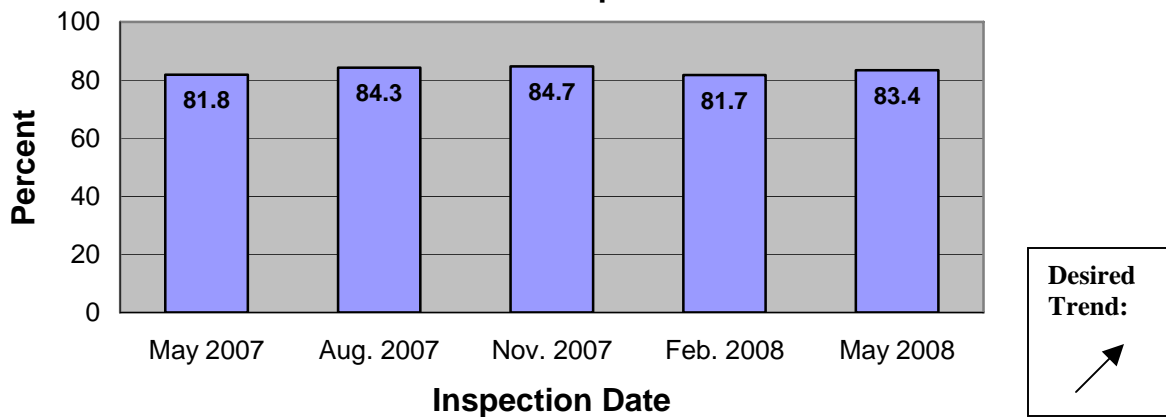
Commuter lot survey cards were distributed to 910 customers in December 2007 and the department received 346 responses. Ninety-seven percent of the customers thought the lots were convenient with 71 percent using them at least five days per week. Eighty-seven percent cited saving fuel costs as the most important reason to use the lot. Seventy-nine percent of the customers were satisfied with cleanliness. MoDOT received many comments about litter and the need for trash cans. Eighty percent of customers were satisfied with safety at the lots with several customers expressing the need for additional lighting and almost nine percent reporting theft and property damage concerns. To address safety concerns, MoDOT has installed a managed surveillance system at two commuter lots in the St. Louis area and met with local law enforcement to familiarize them with the system. Additional law enforcement signing has been posted at some lots.

The quarterly inspections provide input to district maintenance supervisors on work needed at the commuter lot for condition of signs, parking lot surface, litter, and vegetation management. The May 2008 inspections indicated an improvement in the statewide average condition from 81.7 in February of 2008 to 83.4 percent. The condition is also higher than the score of 81.8 percent one year ago.

### Percent of Customers Satisfied with Commuter Lots' Convenience, Cleanliness and Safety



### Percent of Customers Satisfied with Commuter Lots' Convenience, Cleanliness and Safety Statewide Average Score of Commuter Lot Condition Internal Inspections



## Convenient, Clean and Safe Roadside Accommodations

### *Number of users of commuter parking lots*

**Result Driver:** Don Hillis, Director of System Management

**Measurement Driver:** Tim Chojnacki, Maintenance Liaison Engineer

**Purpose of the Measure:**

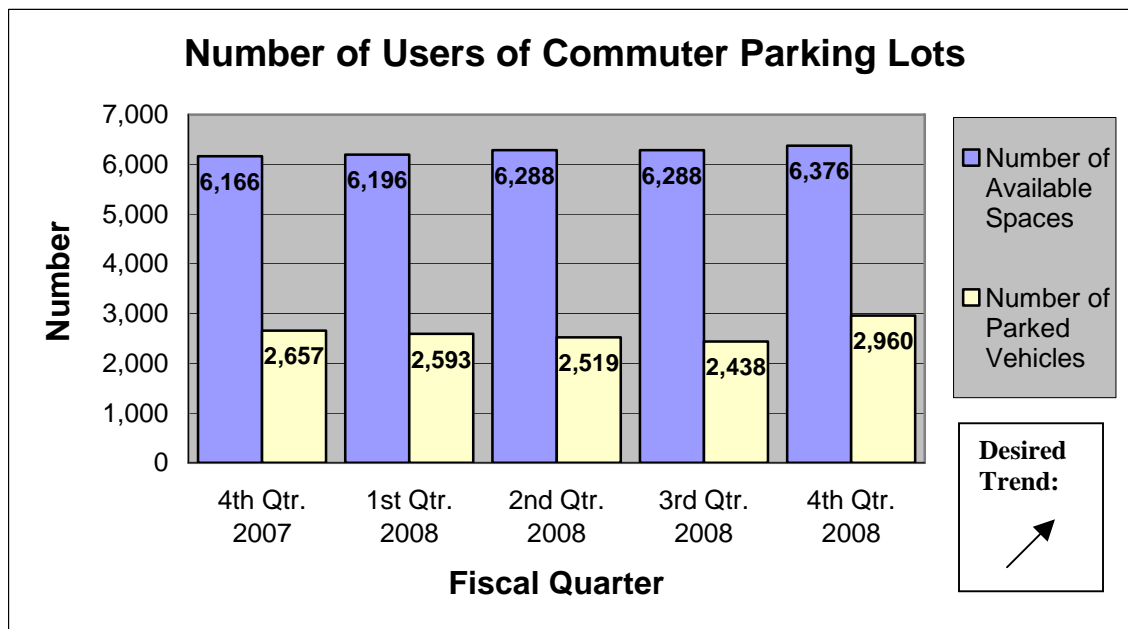
This measure tracks the number of commuter parking lot users. It will help the department determine whether its commuter parking lots are adequate at current locations and whether lots are fulfilling the needs of the traveling public.

**Measurement and Data Collection:**

District maintenance personnel count the number of vehicles parked in each commuter lot in conjunction with the quarterly condition inspections. Data is collected from every district to create a statewide report. This measure is updated quarterly.

**Improvement Status:**

There was an increase in the number of available spaces and number of parked vehicles this quarter. One lot was closed in the Northwest District, one was reopened following construction in the Springfield District, one was reopened and one was added in the St. Louis District. The net increase of available spaces is 88. The number of available spaces statewide is now 6,376. The number of parked vehicles rose significantly to 2,960, up from 2,438 last quarter. To continue to encourage more commuters to use these lots, a plan was created to improve the condition and usage of these lots. Messages have been placed on the Interstate Dynamic Message Boards, the commuter lot webpage has been linked to MoDOT's homepage and the commuter lot webpage has been improved.



## Convenient, Clean and Safe Roadside Accommodations

### *Number of users of rest areas*

**Result Driver:** Don Hillis, Director of System Management

**Measurement Driver:** Stacy Armstrong, Roadside Management Supervisor

**Purpose of the Measure:**

This measure tracks the number of vehicles visiting rest areas. This information helps MoDOT better understand the peak days and times visitors use rest areas, impacting staffing decisions. MoDOT estimates the rest areas have more than 24 million visitors each year.

**Measurement and Data Collection:**

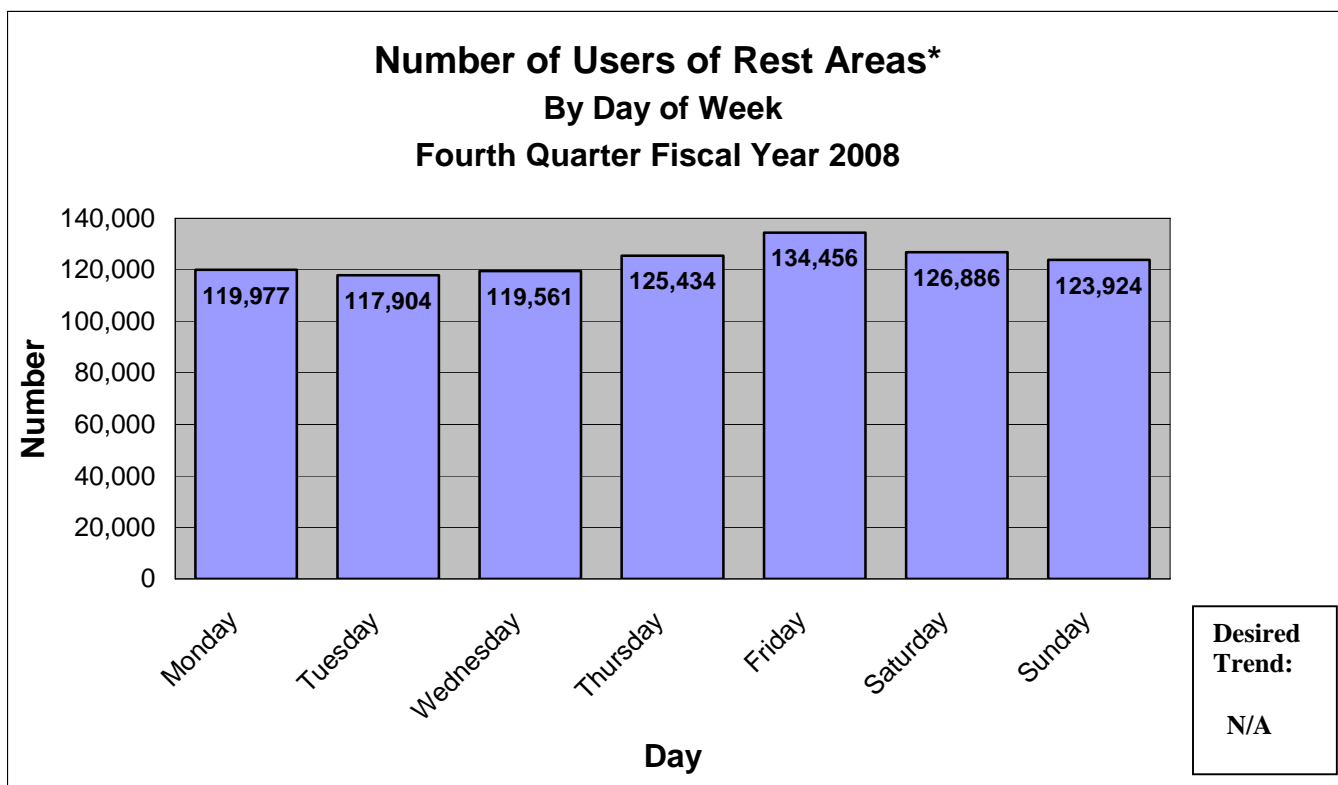
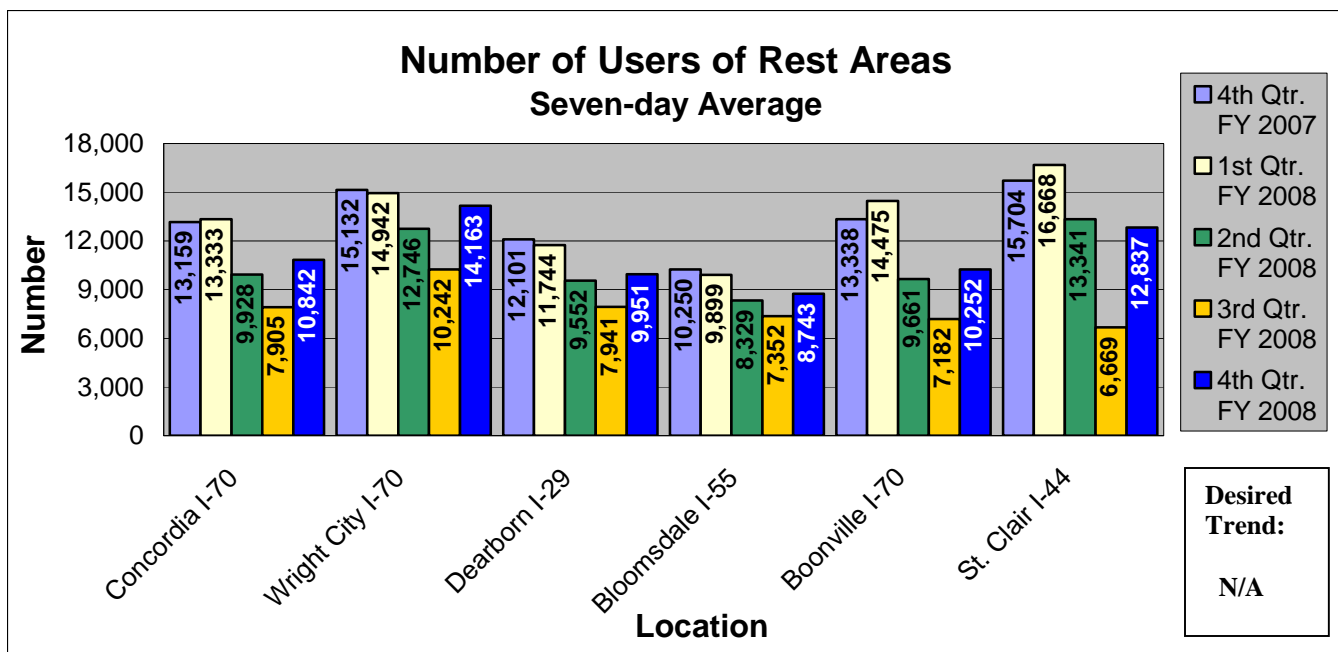
Rest areas at Bloomsdale on Interstate 55, Concordia on Interstate 70, Wright City on Interstate 70, Dearborn on Interstate 29, Boonville on Interstate 70 and St. Clair on Interstate 44 have permanent counters providing data daily. Pavement sensors send data from a solar-powered wireless transfer station. All permanent counter locations have two counters for a total of twelve counts. Five additional sites will have permanent counters installed in 2008. All data is from permanent counters. The counts are for the average seven-day period between April 1 and June 30. This data is updated quarterly.

**Improvement Status:**

The permanent counters installed at Rockport on Interstate 29 and Lathrop on Interstate 35 are experiencing data transfer problems. Permanent counters will be transferring data from 12 different rest areas starting July 2008.

The counting period includes the entire quarter for the six original sites. The number of users in the first graph is the weekly average for each of the six sites. The weekly average is lower than the same period last year and may be because of high fuel prices, resulting in fewer miles traveled. The weekly average is determined by adding the grand totals for each of the six sites for the quarter, dividing by the number of days in the quarter (91 for this quarter) and multiplying by seven for the weekly total.

The second graph provides the total number of visitors for the six sites for each individual day of the week of the quarter. Fridays still remain the busiest day at the rest areas.



\*Concordia, Wright City, Dearborn, Bloomsdale, Boonville and St. Clair



## Convenient, Clean and Safe Roadside Accommodations

### *Number of truck customers that utilize rest areas*

**Result Driver:** Don Hillis, Director of System Management

**Measurement Driver:** Tim Jackson, Maintenance Liaison Engineer

**Purpose of the Measure:**

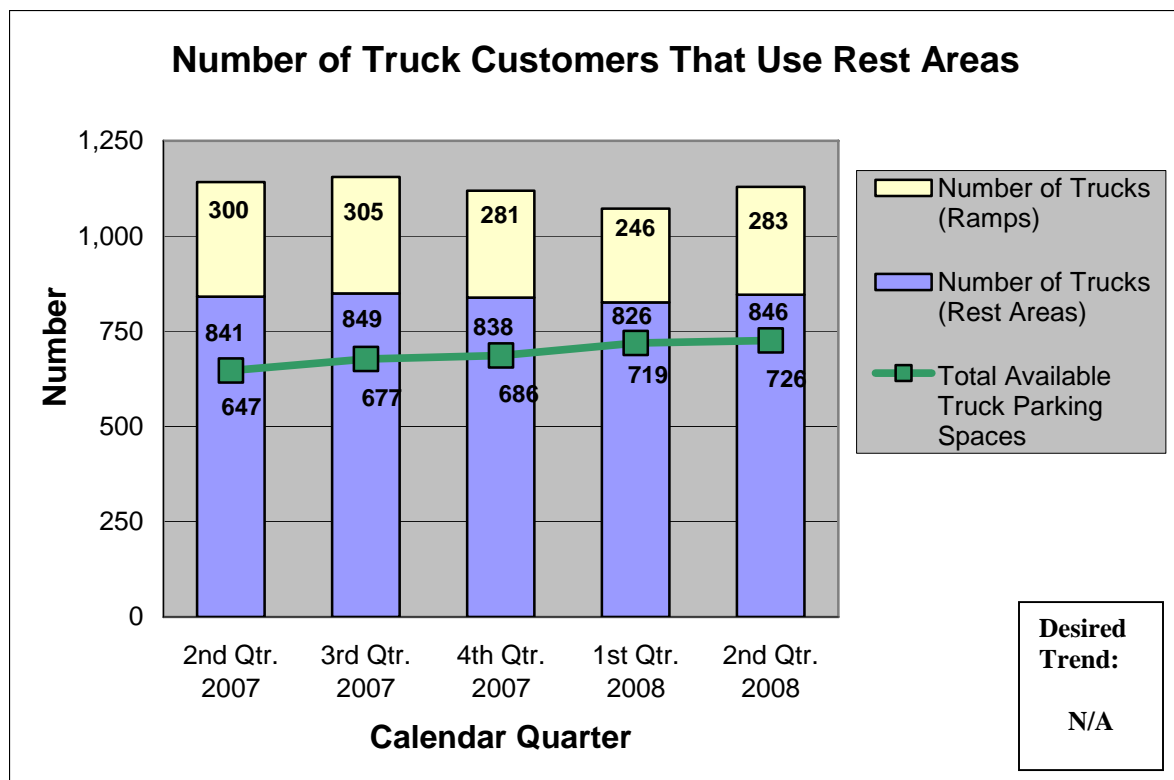
This measure tracks the number of trucks at rest areas, welcome centers and truck parking facilities. The number of trucks using the rest areas and the nearby ramps could be used to help determine how many spaces are needed to provide convenient parking facilities at each rest area.

**Measurement and Data Collection:**

On a monthly basis, district maintenance personnel count the number of trucks parked at welcome centers, rest areas, on nearby ramps within 15 miles of the welcome centers/rest areas and at abandoned weigh stations that have been converted to truck parking facilities. The count is done between 4 and 6 a.m., which is typically the busiest time. Data is collected from every rest area and truck parking facility to create a statewide report and updated quarterly.

**Improvement Status:**

The second quarter of calendar year 2008 showed an increase of 20 in the average number of trucks using the rest areas and other designated truck parking facilities from the previous quarter. The average number of trucks parked in these locations increased 5 from the second quarter of 2007, while the average number of truck parking spaces increased by 79 during the same time period. The Conway rest area closed in June for construction of a new welcome center, while a new truck parking facility at Strafford opened up this quarter. Constructing welcome centers with additional truck parking spaces and converting abandoned weigh stations into truck parking facilities continues to be a way to add parking spaces across the state to accommodate the need for additional truck parking.



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